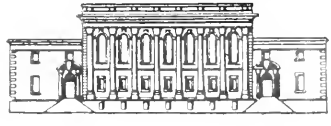

INNOVATION IN A TRADITIONAL MOLD: FDR AND THE SOUTH, 1936

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AN INTRODUCTION

In 1932 Alfred Mossman Landon was the only Republican governor elected in the entire nation just as Franklin Delano Roosevelt, in the same year, was elevated from Governor of New York state to President of the United States. The paths of these two men crossed four years later as Landon sought to unseat the incumbent President. The Literary Digest predicted victory for the Governor of Kansas, estimating 370 electoral votes and 32 states for Landon, leaving a mere 161 electoral votes and 16 states for Roosevelt.[1] Although the Digest had been correct in every previous election, 1936 proved to be an unusual election year. The incumbent won with the support of every state in the nation with the exception of two, Maine and Vermont.

Although the margin of the FDR landslide was comparable to no election since that of Monroe, there were those who had adamantly opposed the incumbent's re-election. Melvin Easton, one of the Republican state chairmen believed, "(The) Underlying issue in the campaign was whether America 'shall become a socialized state or continue to be governed in accordance with the Constitution.'"[2] This xenophobia was sweeping the nation just as reports were being published concerning the rise of Hitler and Mussolini in Europe.

How was it that Franklin Roosevelt overcame these fears and the vitrielic accusations that his re-election would cause the demise of America's free enterprise? His exceptionally large plurality of eleven million votes clearly indicates that most voters had wanted to continue a new deal for the nation.

This mandate was evident in the eleven states of the Old Confederacy, and the South was solid for Roosevelt from Texas to Virginia. Five Southern states---Tennessee, Florida, North Carolina, Virginia, and Texas--- did not repeat their aberrant attempt of 1928 when they voted for Hoover. In 1936, The South had solidly supported Roosevelt in spite of his belief in extensive government spending and in spite of his Yankee birth. This xenophobia of the South towards the North was partially overcome by his dual residency in both New York and Warm Springs. As he, himself, claimed, "...I am at least an adopted Georgian..."[3] He had invested in his new state, establishing the Warm Springs Foundation in 1927 and purchasing approximately 1,000 acres of woodland on Pine Mountain. This served to overcome the stigma of being a Northerner in an area where memories of the Civil War were strong. The feeling was so strong at the time that it was said, "If the Southern white man has an inborn fear of the Negro, he also has deep suspicion of the intention of Northerners."[4] This author goes further saying, "Everywhere Southerners seek to sort out the Yankees: in social gatherings, in business dealings, in pol-

itics, and in public discussions."[5] Considering this disdain for Northerners and for big government, the South's solidarity in 1936 was somewhat baffling.

It is the purpose of this paper to study the reason behind the South's supporting Roosevelt, accomplished by analysing the goals and the methods he utilized to obtain them. Was he actually a revolutionary, attempting to restructure American society, or was he merely a reformer seeking to change the existing form of government?

The answer to these and other questions of the South's allegiance to Roosevelt were sought in both primary and secondary sources. Approximately eight Southern newspapers were utilized in an attempt to see how each area had interpreted Roosevelt's actions, and in turn, how they were presented to the public. This was a rather tenuous approach because many of the newspapers of the day did not have an editorial page per se necessitating perusal of countless pages which even then might yield groundless conclusions. Much greater help was found in the numerous secondary sources available, works ranging from texts by former Brain-truster Tugwell and professional political organizer Farley to works by political scientist Key and historian Hofstadter. Lastly, scholarly journals were used both for contemporary analyses of the 1960's as well as for those written in Roosevelt's day. Impressions were combined from these three sources in seeking an understanding of Roosevelt and the South, 1936.

CHAPTER ONE

THE SOUTH AND THE VICTORY OF 1936, "That most remarkable of Electoral Occurences" 6.

The election of 1936 was remarkable in the plethora of votes cast for the Democratic Party. The incumbent President, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, had gleaned 60.2% of the national popular vote, including that of the "Solid South". It is especially curious to find the eleven states of the former Confederacy supporting a New Yorker whom some feared as a radical. Former Senator Reed of Missouri expressed the fear that a third party was in its incipient stage, a '"Rooseveltian party, neither Republican nor Democratic, but embracing every shade from pink socialism to red communism."'[7] How did Franklin Roosevelt subdue these fears in the South?

He succeeded by careful combination of traditionalism and innovation, enacting unprecedented programs to save a seriously debilitated economy. If his actions were somewhat unprecedented, so too was this era of the nation's greatest depression, a finale to the seeming industrial progress and personal affluence of the twenties. The "Rooseveltian party" carried every state of Dixie. Texas, with the largest population in the South, cast approximately 742,243 votes for the Democracy while South Carolina with fewer voters contributed 114,000. The remaining nine states ranged from a low of 147,000 to a high of 616,000. The statistics were

as follows:

POPULAR VOTES CAST FOR FDR 8.		TOTAL VOTES CAST IN THE STATE 9.	
1.Texas	742,000	1.Texas	850,000
2.N.C.	616,000	2.N.C.	839,000
3.Tenn.	328,000	3.Tenn.	477,000
4.La.	293,000	4.La.	330,000
5.Ga.	255,000	5.Ga.	293,000
6.Fla.	249,000	6.Fla.	327,000
7.Ala.	238,000	7.Ala.	276,000
8.Va.	235,000	8.Va.	335,000
9.Miss.	157,000	9.Miss.	162,000
10.Ark.	147,000	10.Ark.	179,000
11.S.C.	114,000	11.S.C.	115,000

In terms of percentage, Roosevelt votes had ranged from 99.1% of the total vote in South Carolina to a low of 70.1% in Virgi nia. The remainder of the percentages were as follows:

1.S.C.	99.1%	7.Ga.	80.2%
2.Miss.	96.9%	8.Fla.	76.1%
3.La.	88.8%	9.N.C.	73.4%
4.Tex.	84.9%	10.Tenn.	70.8%
5.Ala.	82.6%	11.Va.	70.1%
6.Ark.	82.2%		

This 1936 landslide was especially formidable in contrast to Roosevelt's first attempt to obtain national office as Cox's running mate when the Democratic ticket brought a mere 34% of the nation's votes.[10] According to E.E.Robinson, the South figured largely in the Democratic upsurge between 1920- 1936. He maintains that:

> Whenever the party organizations of the Southern states... act in full accord with the well-recognized city machines of one-half a dozen great cities, then the Democratic electoral vote will bring a Democratic presidential victory.11.

Since 1928[12] the Northern urban areas had combined with the "Solid

South" in a literally unbeatable coalition. Roosevelt's Southern proponents were farmers, hit by the decades of agrarian depression, and small shopkeepers as well as the unusual alliance of black-Americans and Southern Democrats. The opposition consisted nationally of manufacturers, urban newspapers, and business men, the latter which Farley categorizes as "the financial interests and 'Wall Street' (who) were almost frenzied in their opposition."[13]

The South's solidarity for Roosevelt's re-election was reinforced by the structure of the regional economy, for the majority of America's "Big Business" was located in the industrial Northeast. The predominantly smalltown rural South was composed primarily of privately owned businesses, as well as banks and shops. As Stetson Kennedy has depicted it, the small town is generally controlled by one rich man. It is here that the President was to meet opposition in the South. It was:

> This certain type, small-town rich man (that) hated Roosevelt, The New Deal, The Triple A (Agricultural Adjustment Act), and the Federal Land Bank, which took mortgages and farm loans out of his hands.[14]

The overwhelming majority of the population was not so prosperous and found the incumbent President had in some way improved their position.

Roosevelt seemed to enjoy the role of "gentleman farmer", which served to establish rapport between that New Yorker and

the residents of Warm Springs, Georgia, his part time residence since the 1920's. He did maintain a farm in the state where he raised everything from grapes to vegetables and later maintained a sawmill in addition to raising some chickens. In such a way, the President presented himself not as a New York aristocrat with a Harvard degree but merely as one of the neighbors.

This ability to communicate with people of the South was furthered by Roosevelt's personal charm. As one person has characterized this appeal, it is:

> his warm, joyous humanity; partly from his robust, confident spirit; partly from his ability to speak simply and directly to the people as at once leader and companion; and partly from just plain personal charm.15.

This congeniality even wooed professional politicians. Frank Freidel speculates that, "More likely, most Southern politicians interested in Roosevelt were attracted less by what he had to say than by his personal charm and his strategic position within the party."[16] There were those, namely the electorate, who were interested in what he had to say, and from what they heard, they were pleased. According to Virginius Dabney, "No president since the Civil War has revealed the understanding of, and the concern for, the South's problems that Franklin D. Roosevelt has evidenced."[17] This same author points to the agricultural problems broached by the New Deal in credit extension, crop control, parity prices, as verification of this con -

cern. The most vocal dissident was the sugarcane industry. In Mr. Dabney's words:

> The producers of Southern sugarcane seem to be the only substantial bloc of agriculturists in Dixie who feel that the New Deal has been more harmful to them than otherwise. The much larger groups of cotton and tobacco growers take the opposite view, despite the fact that the New Deal has brought littleappreciable benefit to many of the least fortunate tenants, 'croppers, and migrant laborers among them.18.

By 1936 Roosevelt was no neophyte in terms of the South's needs and political problems, for his initiation in this area had not begun with his part time residency in Warm Springs, but much earlier as a part of the Wilson administration. As a young man Franklin Roosevelt had followed in the footsteps of the first President Roosevelt by serving as Assistant Secretary of the Navy. The second President Roosevelt had been appointed to this position by Woodrow Wilson and had served under Josephus Daniels, a North Carolinian. Following the election of 1932, the new Chief Executive, just as had President Wilson before him, apppointed several Southerners to the Cabinet. Prominent among these were Cordell Hull of Tennessee, Secretary of State, Daniel Roper, a South Carolinian, Secretary of Commerce, and Claude Swanson of Virginia, Secretary of the Navy. In addition to these appointees, the incumbent President had selected a Southern Vice-President, John Nance Garner from Texas who served as a symbolic counterbalance to the ticket, actually doing little campaign-

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ing. It has been whimsically speculated that Garner spent most of his time at home fishing prior to the election.

The antipodal relationship between the charismatic President and his Vice-President may be seen as a marriage based upon political compromise. Under Roosevelt, Texas maintained the number two position on the ticket but only after voting down the two-thirds rule, a Pyrrhic victory indeed, at the Philadelphia convention. With the end of the two-thirds rule the South's veto over future Democratic conventions ceased. Ironically this was to have continuous importance while the evanescent "victory" of a Southern Vice-President ended in 1940.

Others leaders in the South were to play a much greater role than did Garner; prominent among these were William Bankhead in the House, James Byrnes in the Senate, and the young Senator Lister Hill. The original ease with which these men ushered the New Deal through Congress was replaced by growing hostility as recovery began. Roosevelt's relationship to the South must be considered first in terms of these men, for the basic question is, how did he obtain their backing so solidly and so long?

CHAPTER TWO

ROOSEVELT AND THE CONGRESSIONAL LEADERSHIP: A TENUOUS ALLIANCE

The relationship between Congress and the thirty-second President was a rather tenuous alliance created in the crisis ridden atmosphere of America's greatest depression. The exigencies of the era from 1932 onward were described by Republican Representative Snell in the following way:

> The situation is so terrible at the present time that we must accept the Administration's recommendations aimed to open the banks and pass the legislation without delay.19.

This sense of urgency made possible the "100 Days" which initiated the New Deal.

To a large extent the cooperative spirit extant, 1932-1934, was contingent upon Southern leadership in the Senate and the House of Representatives, for the seniority system had given all but a paucity of chairmanships to the South and its representatives. As this was the first party victory for the Democrats since Reconstruction, with the exception of the terms of Grover Cleveland and Woodrow Wilson, the committee chairmen responded with alacrity to the requests of their President. Party pride was not the only reason for their assiduous work; added to this was the fact that the majority of their constituents also had voted for the victorious Mr. Roosevelt. Secretary Walter White of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, N.A.A.C.P, summarizes the rationale for Dixie's

loyalty in weighing the advantages which would be lost if Democratic dissension ended in a Republican majority. The consequences would be:

1. A loss in the South's Committee chairmanships if the Democratic majority were replaced with a GOP majority.
2. A limitation upon relief and financial aid.
3. The marasmus of their prestige and power.[20]

Two other factors were decisive, economics and race.

Economics issues played an augmented role as FDR sought to reverse the Depression. According to James Patterson, the Congressional leaders of the New Deal had been:

> essentially progressives of the New Freedom vintage. They continued to believe that their party stood for Wilsonian ideals: regulated competition, states' rights, and individual freedom where it did not impinge upon the liberty of others.[21]

As long as the Administration's actions were interpreted in this perspective, there was little resistance.

Race, on the other hand, was a more subtle point of conflict. Since the memories of Reconstruction and the Radical Republicans, the South had sought refuge in the Democratic Party, for part of their solidarity stemmed from memories of the Civil War and the conflict over slavery. Even during the first term, there were those who "suspected Roosevelt of trying

to revolutionize race relations,"[22] but at this early stage from 1932 to 1936, these suspicions were confined to a group of adamant opponents of Roosevelt.

The work of four men in the Senate had served to allay the fears of the South's more traditional members. Among this former group were James Byrnes of South Carolina, once dubbed the "foremost spokesman"[23] of the New Deal, and later a Supreme Court justice, and the Majority Leader Joseph T. Robinson of Arkansas. Working with them were Chairman of the Finance Committee, Byron "Pat" Harrison of Mississippi, and Vice-President John Nance Garner.

Senator Byrnes had represented South Carolina from 1911 to 1925 in the House of Representatives and in the Senate beginning in 1931. He had voted rather strictly for the New Deal until 1935 but began to change in 1936; he did not feel bound by his conscience to support the President on every bill, nor was he bound by a party post. He took exception with the White House in several cases, most notably on the issue of the "death sentence" contained in the utilities holding company bill.

Majority Leader Robinson had known Franklin Roosevelt since the days of Woodrow Wilson. Robinson had entered the Senate in 1912 and had acquired the post of party leader in the

twenties; therefore, by 1936, his position was a puissant one. An ineluctable foe in battle, he regarded big government with apprehension, although he remained a staunch party supporter. Patterson explains his position in terms of the Democrats' recent acquisition of power. Accordingly, he says:

> Like many other Southerners who had suffered in the Republican Congresses of the 1920's, Robinson was anxious that the Democratic party held together in the 1930's.[24]

Perhaps this impotence under the Republicans was the factor which caused veteran Democrats to guard jealously their solidarity.

Another veteran of the Senate who illustrates this solidarity was Pat Harrison, dubbed the "Grey Fox of the Delta". First elected Senator in 1918, he too, had reservations in economic affairs, but remained stalwart, seeing bills on social security, reciprocal trade, and the NRA sent from his committee to the floor.

John Nance Garner completed this coterie of Roosevelt supporters. Although 68 years old, he moved with alacrity and was still somewhat a character with predilections for tranquil fishing in Uvalde and visiting the zoo in Washington. Garner had served in the Congress since 1903 and was the prototype of the party man. He allegedly said:

> I have always done what I thought best for my country, never varying unless I was advised that two-thirds of the Democrats were for a bill and then I voted for it. 25.

By 1929 he was the Democratic leader in the House of Representatives and two years later the Speaker. In 1932, after some persuasion, Garner agreed to take the second spot on the national ticket. Although a self-made man whose first home was a Texas log cabin, he succeeded in the financial world, becoming owner of two banks in the thirties. Although he could afford it, he never changed his life style in accordance with his increased prosperity, for deficit finance was anathema to the new Vice-President. He, himself, never ventured to purchase or rent a home, but lived in boarding houses and small hotels.

This tenuous alliance of Byrnes, Robinson, Harrison, and Garner managed to keep the Senate largely behind the President until after the 1936 election. One exception was the utility holding-company bill and the "wealth tax". The former, an attempt to limit the powerful utility monopolies, was presented by a Montanan, Burton K. Wheeler, Chairman of the Commerce Committee. According to Title I of this bill, the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) was authorized to dissolve holding companies and under certain circumstances this so-called "death sentence" could be invoked. As opposition mounted, the Democrats for the first time widely criticized legislation pro-

posed by their party chief with even James Byrnes, previously so loyal, joining in. An attempt by Senator Dietrich to kill this provision was lost 44-45 when twenty-nine Democrats had failed to put party over personal beliefs. Among these were "Cotton Ed", Ellison D., Smith of South Carolina and Walter George of Georgia.

The fight which followed was of a different nature. Perhaps pressure on the "Left" from Huey P. Long was the reason for the controversial tax bill which created this factional struggle over a steeper tax on inheritance as well as a dividends surtax and a gift tax. As one Republican leader complained:

> In the old days we were opposed by a party whose slogan was 'a tariff for revenue only'. Now the fact is, whatever the slogan may be, that it is a party which favors a tax not only for revenue, but for revenge.26.

This controversial tax would supplement only slightly the incoming revenues, and Roosevelt's untimely presentation of the bill in the summer months to a weary Congress, was not conducive to easy passage. Complaints then were made that the President was striking out at the rich, but finally an agreement was reached and the proposal was attached as a rider to a pro forma tax bill up for renewal. By August the bill had been passed in a weaker form. With 57 votes in favor and 22 against, the final

act was passed without the original inheritance measures but with an augmented tax on estates and an additional dividend tax. These two issues, the public utilities bill and the tax bill, further debilitated Roosevelt's strength in the Senate in mid-1935. Although Robinson, Harrison, and Byrnes had voted with the President, they were growing recalcitrant, making their future course less predictable.

Even Vice-President Garner was to take issue with the President eventually. His concern for business as well as his personal disdain for deficit financing could not be reconciled with the ever-expanding scope of the New Deal. Francis Simkins asserts rather firmly:

> He(Garner) considered the New Deal nothing more than an emergency measure soon to be abandoned for more conventional objectives. When, however, the President persisted in favoring organized labor and urging the reorganization of the Supreme Court, the Texan's innate conservatism proved stronger than his party loyalty. He secretly became the leader of a Democratic revolt against Roosevelt. 27.

This revolt following the Court fight of 1937 was not the first such apostasy. The earlier factionalism within the party over the utilities bill and the tax bill had been a result of specific issues. There were more serious rifts in the Senate from about 1933 onward which did not arise with the issues but instead were a continuing irritant created by the President's op

ponents, most prominent of whom was Huey Long.

Long's influence beyond the forum of the United States Senate was great; his votaries were nationwide, threatening the position of the President, himself. According to Jim Farley's calculations, the Louisiana Senator could capture between 3-4 million votes in a three party contest.[28] Ironically enough, Long's local constituency was very similar to that of FDR. Sindler maintains:

> Huey captured in his state the hitherto nonvoting elements which the New Deal had attracted on a national scale... It (Longism) came closer to the salient issues of the day than had a raft of 'good government' predecessors of Huey. 29.

The Long government did achieve a government which professed concern for the lower-income groups, although many of the methods utilized obscured this.

The "Kingfish" had been born in 1893 in North Central Louisiana, in a family of nine children, the eighth to be born. In 1914 he studied at Tulane, completing the three year course although he once allegedly made the remark that 'our kind don't need college.'[30] Nonetheless in 1924, he campaigned for such educational reforms as free textbooks and more schools. By 1929 his program as Governor had run into difficulty, but he recovered from impeachment proceedings sufficiently in 1930 to run for the Senate, holding both offices simultaneously.

From 1932, Long's "Share-the-Wealth" programs gained momentum nationally. In much the tone of Bryan's "Cross of Gold" speech which he had heard as a youth, he upheld that 'Every man was a king, but no man were the crown'.[31] The objectives of his program were diverse; to provide money for college, funds to veterans, and pensions to the elderly. Although the latter was the most publicized facet of sharing the wealth, there were other provisions, such as the hours limitations of workers, purchase of farm products, and surrender of fortunes over $3 million to the Treasury. It should be pointed out that in his oratory promoting this plan, Sen. Long did not utilize race prejudice to arouse his audience.

The conflict in ideas between Roosevelt and Long was exacerbated as time progressed. Patronage seemed to be flowing to Long's enemies and income tax investigations were being begun against several of his lieutenants. In the midst of this rivalry, 1935 came and with it the assassination of Huey Long, which occurred as he was walking through the state capitol in Baton Rouge. Suddenly, Carl A. Weiss, Jr. appeared in the hall, shot Long, and in turn, was fired upon by bodyguards following behind. The two men had not met previously, but Dr. Weiss's family had been vehemently opposed to Longism.

Following the assassination, there was no one second in command to unite the Long forces in the state, and those who

did attempt to take control differed from their former leader. According to Sindler, "reversing Long, his successors pursued power as a means to the accumulation of money."[32] The power play in Louisiana was divided into two factions, one headed by Gerald L. K. Smith and Earle J. Christenberry and the other by James A. Noe, each of which settled its quarrel with the Administration by 1936. The Louisiana delegates to the Philadelphia Convention not only cast twenty votes for FDR and seconded the nomination, but helped to defeat the old two-thirds vote. By the end of that year, Long's former lieutenants had largely been reincorporated into national Democratic politics, and the resistance to the President had been weakened in Louisiana. The opposition to Roosevelt was not to be checked so easily; in Virginia, the Glass-Byrd machine was still powerful.

Carter Glass had been born in 1858 and at age seven had watched the Union soldiers pull out of his hometown of Lynchburg. He attempted to harrass them then just as he was later to wrangle over policies promulgated by a Yankee president. A staunch partisan since Wilson's time, Glass moved from the state Senate to the United States Senate, and in 1932 he was in Chicago as Franklin Delano Roosevelt was nominated by the Democratic Party. He agreed to make one speech in favor of the nominee although,he, himself, had not voted for Roosevelt until

the last ballot. Although he liked the candidate personally, he had one objection. "All his life Glass had been opposed to men seeking public office---and, to him, the Presidency, or a Presidential nomination, was one honor that should always seek the man."[33] Before the convention, Senator Glass had been invited to attend meetings held by the then Governor of New York; the redolent political nature of these apparently struck Glass as bad taste. Nonetheless, the Senator did speak as requested in 1932 although he continued to watch with apprehension the economic proposals of the later victorious candidate. Refusing to accept his post of Secretary of the Treasury which he formerly had held, Glass specifically objected to the Administration's policy toward gold. When Roosevelt informed him that the banks were to be closed, the Senator protested privately on the grounds that it was unnecessary and secondly on the grounds that he lacked the authority. Later in 1933, trouble was to arise over the Federal Reserve activity and the devaluation of the dollar. An author of the Federal Reserve Act, Glass was far less than pleased to see the President experimenting in such an unprecedented area. The final Agricultural Adjustment Act was to find the Senator voting "nay", as he did likewise in the case of the National Industrial Recovery Act. The latter touched Glass personally, for the codes prescribed under the Act

included newspapers, constituting, he believed, a violation of freedom of the press. He informed General Johnson, the Chairman of the National Recovery Administration, that he had no intention of complying. In his words, he railed, "I just want to tell you, General, that your blue buzzard will not fly from the mastheads of my two newspapers."[34] When Johnson acquiesced, Glass's temper burst forth. He replied acrimoniously, saying:

> I do not appreciate your willingness to make exceptions of my newspapers. If this act is constitutional, you have as much authority to enforce it against me as you have against any other person but because it is not constitutional you have no right to enforce it against anyone.[35]

By 1936, the Virginia Senator was weary of federal intervention and declined a request to speak for the incumbent President. He did insist that he intended to vote Democratic, saying:

> It is distinctly distasteful for any one to infer, or even think, that I will not support the nominee of my party. The mere fact that I have not always voted for New Deal measures does not mean I will not vote for Mr. Roosevelt. I will vote for him.[36]

It was said that Glass considered retiring in 1936, but was dissuaded by his wife from doing so. He felt that states's rights and separation of powers had been violated, and he did not favor increased spending and more taxation.[37] He was 78 that year and had lived to see great changes in the country's economy. His disillusionment is mose clearly depicted by a statement that he made two years later:

> On his eightieth birthday, he said he regretted to have lived to see the principles in which he believed eclipsed and his country distressed.[38]

In spite of the formidable power of Glass and Long, opposition to Roosevelt was not confined to the Senate. The House of Representatives was to prove equally as recalcitrant, although the Democrats had maintained a majority of 319 members to 103 Republican Representatives since 1934. The utilities bill which shook the Senate had an equal effect in the House. Sam Rayburn, Democrat of Texas, led the fight for the Administration only to be countered by the Rules Committee when he requested a roll call vote on the so-called "death sentence". Chairman John O'Connor of New York who refused this request had replaced the Administration supporter William Bankhead of Alabama when a shuffling of positions had made the latter majority leader. Emotions ran high, leading a formerly reticent member, George Huddleston from Alabama, stridently to denounce the proposal. He was met with paeans of applause rather than criticism for his apostasy, and by "teller vote", the "death sentence" was rejected by 224-152. A final rejection came August 1st, 210-155. A compromise between the Senate and the House was finally reached allowing the holding companies under the watchful eye of the SEC to regulate several utility systems if local management and operation were unaffected or if the

company could not exist singly. By the end of August, each house had passed the compromise bill. The controversy which followed over the tax bill augured poorly for the President who also faced re-election in 1936.

The relationship of the President to the Congress from 1932-1936, in summary, went through two stages. From the Inauguration until 1935, the President was able to command authority; bills were passed quickly, often with mere summary perusal as a result of the Depression anxiety. The Southern Democrats as a whole were obligated by the wide margin of votes given to the President in their home states. Secondly, the South's Congressmen were enjoying the prestige of a Democratic President for the first time since Wilson, and attention from the White House could be awesome, rebuilding or destroying a man's political career. Thirdly, the memory of the Reconstruction was still too close for the South to forget.

The Second Stage was from 1935-1936 when Congressional loyalty began to fail. These were the years of the Public Utilities Holding Companies Bill and the tax bills. Fortunately for Roosevelt, the opposition in this stage was too sporadic and too weak to affect the outcome in 1936. In all, his first term was successful in dealing with the Congress.

This general Congressional support reinforced the South - erners belief in their President. Roosevelt's strength lay in that he managed to bring improvements, if slowly, into the failing economy and stabilized the existing system when some were calling for its overthrow. In a time of great insecurity, he had given the South confidence that the maelstrom of the latter nineteenth century would not be repeated.

CHAPTER III

RELIEF, RECOVERY, REFORM: THE CENTRAL ISSUE IN THE SOUTH, 1936

Relief, recovery, and reform, the watchwords of Roosevelt's economic program, constituted the principle issue in 1936. The reason for this emphasis was the failure of America to recover from the severe depression of 1929.

The nation was taken by surprise when the stock market crashed in 1929. Less than one year previously, on December 4, 1928, Calvin Coolidge sanguinely proclaimed: "This country can regard the present with satisfaction and anticipate the future with optimism."[39] Businessmen, likewise, predicted continuing expansion. One such man, Irving T. Bush, declared, '"We are only at the beginning of (a) period that will go down in history as a golden age."'[40]

In stark contrast to these predictions, the stock market began to vacillate wildly on October 24 and continued to do so for several days. The crash that followed resulted in widescale unemployment and a drop in the Gross National Product from slightly more than 104 billion in 1929 to 56 billion in 1933. By 1934 an increase of 9 billion was reported, and by 1936 the GNP had climbed to 82.7 billion.[41] Although fluctuations and set backs continued throughout the first term of Roosevelt, people were slowly regaining confidence.

Hoover's efforts to reverse the Depression had failed. He had recommended only an indirect role for the government, leaving to private institutions the role of alleviating personal needs although he did call conferences to discuss the crisis with business leaders, labor, and farm spokesmen. The Federal Reserve maintained a policy of "easy money" while Hoover appealed to the state executives to increase public projects. A Federal Farm Board was established which granted loans, and limitations in weekly working hours were set. During this time, business did answer the President's plea to a certain extent; General Electric provided unemployment insurance and the International Harvester Company of Chicago provided loans. With this limited action, substantive change did not follow.

Hoover towards the end of his administration was forced to take more direct action, placing under the federal government the obligation of keeping wages at a specified level and in 1932 creating the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. It is noteworthy that the creation of the RFC was not a very revolutionary act, for the funds allotted could be given only to existing enterprises, providing loans and insurance policies. Although the President did take a step forward in agreeing to the Glass-Steagall Act of 1932, concerning bond issues, in the end, little new was created, and the serious economic crisis remained in America's industry.

The plight of the farmer was even more desperate. Southern agriculture, practically destroyed by the Civil War, had been depressed since the end of the nineteenth century. Although Bryan, the candidate of the agrarian Mid-West, was defeated, farmers did find some limited prosperity in the decade which followed. The price of farm land increased from $16.6 billion fo $34.8 billion, and corn increased from $.21 per bushel to $.35 per bushel in 1900.[42] At the same time industrial goods rose 20% while farm produce went up 50% in value. According to Soule in Economic Forces in American History, the demand increased as the population increased by 40% ~~and~~; the supply became more limited, increasing by only a 5% gain in farmland.[43] During the next decade from 1910 to 1920, this prosperity continued but at a diminishing rate. The First World War did stimulate the market, stimulating exports from $138 million in edible goods to $918 million in 1920.[44] This wartime boom resulted in a continuing rise in farm values, $66 billion in 1920 as opposed to $17 billion in 1900.[45] Prosperity seemed close at hand. This seeming Golden Age of farming, Soule acknowledged :

> In terms of progress up the economic scale, it would be difficult to find an example in history of so large a class of people rising so rapidly from relative poverty to comparative affluence as did large sections of American farmers in the twenty-five years after 1896. 46.

This seeming affluence could not continue indefinitely. By 1921 farm prices were on their way downward again. Following the war, the demand for exports had decreased, for as the Europeans began to cultivate their land again, farm exports were further diminished. The prosperity of 1919 when the gross income reached $17 billion was ephemeral indeed. Between 1923 and 1929, this had fallen to $11-12 billion, and to $5 billion by 1932 while manufactured goods had increased by 5% and agricultural produce had declined to 50% of the Pre-World War price. Since taxes and mortgages accounted for approximately one-third of the farmers' available funds in 1932, they became trapped in a cycle of borrowing and subsequent debt.[47]

Land speculation resulted in further instability, causing banks to fail. Between 1920 and 1930, 71% of the banks had failed in Florida, 29% in South Carolina, and 20% in North Carolina. Concurrently prices began to fail in the post-war era as a decline in available markets began. The consequence was deeper debt for the South, further depressed by the failure of Northern industry and the subsequent closing of its Southern branches. Although this limited industry was a serious problem, the paramount difficulty in the South was still agriculture. C. Vann Woodward touches upon this salient issue in the following:

> Common to both Populists and New Dealers was an antagonism to the values and dominant leaders of the business community. Among both was a sense of urgency and an edge of desperation about the demand for reform. And in both, so far as the South and West were concerned, agricultural problems were the most desperate, and agrarian reforms occupied the center of attention.48.

It was this desperation, this plight of agriculture, which led Roosevelt to dub the South,"the Nation's number one economic problem".[49] Such was the plight of the nation when Roosevelt was elected to the Presidency in 1932.

The new President vigorously employed innovative means to rebuild the American economic system. According to William Hesseltine in The South in American History: "The government assumed new functions and new responsibilities but did not disturb the basic outlines of the capitalistic system."[50] He continues, saying, "He (Roosevelt) acted in the spirit of Macaulay's dictum 'Reform in order to preserve'[51] The President preserved traditional government's role through the "New Deal" by incorporating factions of every kind into the government without giving in entirely to any of them. He gained the support of many former Share-the-Wealth partisans by his social security program, while gaining the support of more conservative voters by his actitude to wards banking and agriculture which he left firmly in private control. The total of these diverse interests equaled the New Deal, which Roosevelt, described as:

> a satisfactory combination of the Square Deal and the New Freedom... the fulfillment of the progressive ideas expounded by Theodore Roosevelt of a partnership between

> business and government and also of the determination of Woodrow Wilson that business should be subjected through the power of government, to drastic legal limitations against abuses. 52.

Thus under the aegis of the New Deal Roosevelt expanded the scope of the government without permanently changing its goals.

What were these goals? From the definition given above, it might be described first as an active, positive role in the nation's economy. The inference here is that no need exists to restructure the economy but merely to have safeguards against monopolies and unfair business practice. The "satisfactory combination" then could be found not in opposing business but in joining with private enterprise for the public good, an attempt to stimulate the deflated economy. It is ironic that the President would be viewed by some as radical, as did the author of a letter to the editor of the Knoxville (Tennessee) Journal, September 7, 1936, saying:

> It seems that the administration in Washington has turned to socialism with the AAA, NRA, and the TVA and other projects which are socialistic, to heal the depression. In doing this, it has disregarded our American traditions, party platforms, and even the Constitution. 53.

It seems more realistic to say not that Roosevelt "disregarded our American traditions", but that through tradition, he enacted change to the extent that the crisis demanded. As a member of the "Leftist" League for Independent Political Action depicted it:

> (Roosevelt) stands for correcting some of the evils of our present system. He does not stand for correcting the

system itself.[54]

In "correcting the system itself", he occasionally followed the path set by Herbert Hoover.

The first policy, initiated under Hoover and continued by the Roosevelt administration was the loan provision enacted to aid farmers. Under the Republican administration, the Federal Farm Board was established, according to the 1929 Federal Market Act, to deal with farm surplus. This was maintained in the New Deal under the aegis of the Federal Farm Mortgage Act and supplemented with the Surplus Commodity Corporation which bought excess produce from farms and then redistributed it among the unemployed. Lands which were becoming useless were also bought to limit the supply, thus causing prices to rise. This was a mechanical way to repeat the prosperity of the period from 1900-1920.

Hoover had once more set the precedent for FDR in the field of public works and in facets of both the Agricultural Adjustment Act and the National Industrial Recovery Act begun before 1932. Credit extension to enable farm workers to own their own land was one of these policies and was originally established under Hoover's Federal Land Bank Program. The AAA went one step further, including parity price provisions as well as incentives to limit production, while a similar

act, the Farm Credit Act of 1933, provided loans for more general debts. In 1934 farmers were able, through the Frazier-Lemke Mortgage Moratorium Act to prevent foreclosure on their mortgages for a five year period.

The National Recovery Administration was also a melange of the old and the new, combining public works with a new controversial title under Section 7A, giving contract specifications and limited rights to labor. Nonetheless, the principle purpose of the NRA was to stimulate productivity and employment, not to restructure the economy, According to Basil Rauch, "The chief purpose of the AAA and NRA was recovery."[55]

Numerous other agencies were created for this same purpose, recovery through public works, such as the Civilian Conservation Corps and later the Public Works Administration under Harold Ickes. The CCC was aimed at employing youth just as the National Youth Administration later provided jobs for students. The CCC was a departure from Hoover in that it was an adjunct of the government, although traditional in spirit.

Roosevelt utilized public works extensively and added direct loans to industry. The Republicans in 1932 had set the precedent for action in founding the Reconstruction Finance Corporation under which loans were provided only to institutions already in existence. Later under the Roosevelt Administration the RFC could also service private enterprises themselves.

There were other areas in which Roosevelt acted without precedent. According to E.E. Robinson, "For the able-bodied and the healthy there were no precedents for government aid."[56] In this aid to the "able-bodied" Roosevelt utilized government agencies, a step Hoover had not taken. However, this did not deviate from the Administration's official New Deal policy of recovery through the existing system. The Administration merely began to take on the additional responsibiliby of relief as a temporary measure, departing here from the Hoover Administration.

Arthur Schlesinger depicts Roosevelt's conception of government as if the president himself had stated:

> (It was a) national responsibility to see that no one starved and, in line with that resolve, launched the most colossal program of relief ever undertaken anywhere.[57]

In 1933 the Federal Emergency Relief Administration was created expressly for this and implemented on the State level, similar to Hoovers public works and loan projects. The Civil Works Administration was founded less than seven months later to give relief through providing work, but this time acting under a unitary, rather than a state system of implementation. The most colossal relief measure was the Works Progress Administration, headed by Harry Hopkins, which served to organize the plethora of relief agancies created by the New Deal. This task was

a grandiose attempt to assemble not only laborers and clerical workers but artists and professors. Schools, roads, and dams were built as well as hospitals and parks. Those not employed in building might be utilized to write, to do historical research, or provide drama presentations for the public. These programs were all componenta of relief, but in 1933 to relief was added recovery as a goal of the Administration.

Under recovery programs Hoover's RFC and public works, as mentioned above, were continued by Roosevelt in an attempt again to save the American economy. The Home Owners' Loan Corporation provided loans for homeowners to regain confiscated residences and to complete mortgage payments on homes. The following year a new Federal Housing Administration supported rehabilitation of homes and businesses, a previously unheard of act. For the first time "slum clearance" programs were enacted , and model residences were constructed, displaying a concern for urban area problems as did the Resettlement Administration.

Three innovations which followed deserve the title of "reform" for they were to create a permanent institutionalized departure from America's previous experience. The first of these was the attitude towards gold and the use of a new monetary policy. Although the President's decision to drop the gold standard met opposition on Capitol Hill, the Congress, itself, in

1933 voided all requirements to repay debts in gold. Paper money was legal tender, valid for all debts, and private citizens were no longer allowed to buy gold. By these acts, the government hoped to increase the number of dollars, inflating the economy by setting gold at 59% per dollar.[58]

The second unprecedented action taken by Roosevelt was that of the TVA, the Tennessee Valley Authority. Ostensibly an attempt to control the perennial floods and to harness hydroelectric power, the TVA actually became a super-agency providing everything from information on farming to replanting forests. Ironically enough, Hoover had vetoed a similar plan at Muscle Shoals. Roosevelt with Congressional backing undertook this task in 1933, enabling the people of the area to have cheaper utility rates while TVA prices acted as a "yardstick" for national utility prices. The difficulty came when the government utilities competed with private companies, most well-known of which was the Commonwealth and Southern System, controlled by none other than Wendell Wilkie. As Charles Beard and George H. E. Smith pointed out in The Old Deal and the New, the two powers, private industry and the government, co-existed; there was no attempt to nationalize the other components of the economy. These two authors maintain:

> the Government was projected into private enterprise and became the owner of certain means of production without making any 'revolution', without forming any wholesale plan to invade the field of private enterprise.[59]

Thus, the TVA stood alone as a government corporation or project in a free enterprise economy.

The TVA was not limited to the state of Tennessee but extended to the six neighboring states of Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Kentucky, Virginia, and North Carolina. The Muscle Shoals nitrate plant used in World War I and the power of the Tennessee River were used to restore the area. Surprisingly the local rivalries were overcome as the federal government headed this massive cooperative effort.

Along with the TVA, Social Security was the most unusual program implemented under the New Deal. Antedated in substance by the pensions of the Share-the-Wealth Program, Social Security was enacted in August of 1935. There were two basic provisions, the first unemployment insurance for future slumps and aid in prosperous, as well as poor times, to the dependent children, the elderly, and the blind. By the time the federal government acted, seven states had already undertaken an insurance plan while thirty-five states had enacted a policy of aid to the elderly.[60] Although a federal Social Security Board was set up, the program was debilitated both by the state boards which served to implement it and by the narrow limits which included less than 50% of the 1930 labor force, about 22 million people.[61] Many of those excluded were females and Negro males who earned a living by household work or farm labor. It also may be noted that the

reduced size of the labor force in the thirties, consequently fewer people were eligible for social security.[62] The outcome was a minimal insurance plan in an inchoate stage. Nonetheless it was the first federal insurance undertaken by the government, demonstrating a new conception of government responsibility.

In summary, the novelty of President Roosevelt's policy lay in three factors: the scope, the number of agencies established, and lastly, their diversity. The scope of government was expanded during the first term to include approximately 20 million people benefitting from relief,[63] as well as 1.6 million CCC trainees[64], and 600,000 youth subsidized by the National Youth Administration.[65] Through the Home Owners' Loan Corporation one million homeowners were able to stave off foreclosure.[66] The government made more than a million contracts with cotton producers and more than .5 million contracts with wheat growers.[67] Never before had the federal government touched directly the lives of so many people.

A second aspect of the New Deal was the very number of agencies created to deal with relief and recovery. Within one term, the following agencies were established: the FERA, CWA, WPA, CCC, NYA, PWA, HOLC, FHA, NRA, AAA, TVA, RA, and lastly the Social Security Administration. These organizations dealt osten-

sibly with everything from housing to dams, from the elderly to the young. This great variety of government activity illustrates the diversity under the Roosevelt Administration.

This diversity was the third factor to be noted about the New Deal. Agencies ranged from the TVA which indulged in giving information on crop rotation, fertilizers, and reforestration to the NYA which dealt strictly with young people. By 1936 the Depression had not been entirely reversed, but the individual had recourse in these numerous government organs, inspiring a sense of confidence not extant from 1929-1932.

How was it that Roosevelt expanded the role of government and yet maintained the support of the South which jealously guarded its states' rights? There seem to have been two basic reasons, Roosevelt's understanding of the area's agricultural needs and his own philosophy of state and federal rights. The former dates back to the days of the Wilson Administration under Secretary Daniels. According to Grantham:

> He (Daniels) was one of the early enthusiasts for the cause of Franklin D. Roosevelt, who owed a great debt to Daniels for having given him an appreciation of the agrarian liberalism the North Carolinian had long embodied. 68.

It is evident that this influenced Roosevelt in the thirties. A letter to the editor of the Richmond Times-Dispatch, stated the case for Roosevelt accordingly:

> It (anti-Roosevelt propaganda) will certainly have no effect upon us Southerners, for ever since the Civil War we have paid tribute to the great aggregations of wealth through the tariff and other discriminatory legislation. Now for the first time for over 70 years we have a President who has attempted to even up things by giving aid to our farmers. We are a grateful people, and will remember him and ourselves on the day of the election.69.

And remember they did in 1936.

The agricultural reason for voting for Roosevelt was somewhat mystifying, considering the structure of the rural society. The South was composed of large landowners constituting an elite group while the masses were poor tenant farmers. Tenancy, once proposed by the American Colonization Society as a transitional period following slavery,[70] became an accepted condition following the Civil War but ~~became~~ a permanent, not a transitory institution. Not freedmen alone, but also poor whites became tenants eking out a living on effete soil. Payment began as a portion of the crop harvested but later became a set fee, adding to the landowners profit. By the turn of the century, 70% of the cotton producers were captured by this system,[71] and prices began to fall. Cotton fell from $.12/ lb. in the 70's to $.09 in the 80's and to $.07 in the 90's. William Hesseltine explained the increase in tenancy as relative to cotton's marasmus:

> The uncertainties of life in the Cotton Kingdom brought an increase in tenancy. From 1910 to 1930 farms operated by tenants in ten cotton-producing states increased from 55.1 per cent to 61.8 per cent. 72.

Thus as cotton vacillated with the weather and the boll weevil, so, too, did the fortunes of the poor sharecroppers.

The Roosevelt Administration had enacted the AAA in 19 33, the Cotton and Tobacco Control Acts in 1934, and the Soil Conservation and Domestic Allotment Act in 1936. Of these the AAA best exemplifies the pattern which the Administration's policies followed, for in this program contracts were inevitably favorable to the wealthy landowners, who benefitted by government payment for limiting the crops. At the same time, tenants were left without land to cultivate while the large farmers increased their profits. One basic cause for this inequity lay in the contracts themselves, as the landlord and the government formulated them without including the tenant. A study made by Dr. William R. Amberson of the University of Tennessee reported that 15-20% of these lost their tenancy as a result of these contracts.[75] An attempted unionization of farm workers in Arkansas gained national attention as it attempted to ameliorate the plight of the tenant. According to the New York Times,

> For many of them (the sharecroppers) the "Three A's" have spelled, unemployment, shrunken incomes, and a lowered standard of living, if the hand-to-mouth existence they have led since the war between the states may be called living at all...[74].

How did Roosevelt maintain these poor farmers' sympathy?

It appears that the tenants believed that the President was deeply concerned about them and had established numerous agencies to aid them. They may have preferred to blame the local wealthy

rather than the federal government for their destitution. The President appeared to be doing all that he could, and the poor were gleaning some benefit from the numerous relief plans, social security, and the cheaper utilities of the TVA. Lastly, the contrast between Hoover's proposal of merely indirect aid and the active "100 Days" further enhanced the Chief Executive's image as one of great concern.

The second factor, that of the South's distaste for federal intervention, might have appeared a disadvantage to the incumbent. To the contrary, he utilized state governments to dispense his New Deal proposals. Frank Freidel in F.D.R. and the South characterizes the President as "one of the most eloquent exponents of states' rights."[75] According to this author, "he looked to Jefferson as the advocate of a better life for the common man, not as a bulwark for the privileged."[76]

Again the AAA exemplifies this aspect of the Administration's policy. Implementation was left to local authorities, and no evidence was required of these local landowners to show that the tenants were being taken care of. When there was federal intervention, it was upon request of these local leaders. According to George Tindall, the feeling had changed little since Wilson's day. He asserts that "Like the radicals of the Wilson era, Southern agrarians kept pushing the New Deal toward increased governmental intervention."[77] This contradicts the popularly held idea

that the South has long been anti-federal intervention. This is illustrated by an agricultural poll which reported that there was "support for marketing controls from 98 per cent of the AAA committeemen, 99 per cent of the county agents, and 93 per cent of the crop reporters."[78] The Bankhead Cotton Control Act followed, led by the Alabama Senator, disproving the belief that the South always disdained federal aid.

V.O. Key, Jr. in Southern Politics points out that the "Confederacy" resents intervention only when it will disturb the racial status quo. Accordingly he says:

> (There are) those few issues on which the South stands solidly against both Republicans and nonsouthern Democrats and those issues reflect a common determination to oppose external intervention. The Southern Senators voted against Federal investigators who would look into lynchings, against Federal investigators who would inquire whether Negroes were discriminated against in the expenditure of educational funds, and against Federal officials who would seek to prevent discrimination against Negroes in employment. 79.

This was the crux of the South's anxiety, the fear that the federal government would shake the uneasy balance of race "relations" in the area.

It would seem curious that the South would vote to re-elect a New Yorker and a big spender as President, particularly if the race issue were raised. The key lies in that Roosevelt took an ambiguous stance in terms of actual legislation to better the plight of the Negro, while expressing concern. These two postures led to our next phase of consideration, the uneasy alliance between Northern blacks and Southern whites within the party in 1936.

CHAPTER IV

NORTHERN NEGROES AND SOUTHERN DEMOCRATS---ROOSEVELT AND RACE, 1936

The race question did not remain dormant until the 1960's. To the contrary, race was an issue originally in the seventeenth century. Africans brought to America as indentured servants in the Jamestown colony soon became part of an institutionalized slavery. Benjamin Quarles recorded the chronology of events in this way: in 1619 the "servants" arrived, they worked for about three-fourths of the century, and by 1700, slavery was an accepted system. In the early nineteenth century, this same issue of race led to the antipodal factions of slaveholders against Abolitionists. Following the War and Reconstruction, the South became avidly Democratic in reaction to the severity of the Radical Republicans and out of local disdain for the Northerners' camaraderie with freedmen.

By the 1930's this feeling had not been dispelled, for to depart from the party was an apostasy unthinkable. As Henry Moon points out, "Bourbon Southerners, Democrats by tradition, who (were) chastened by their unhappy defection of 1928, returned to the party of their fathers in 1932."[80] The futility of leaving theDemocratic side was heightened by the one party system which pervaded the South. As Ashmore points out in <u>An Epitaph for Dixie,</u> changes came concommitantly with advancement in communications and transportation in this century. As the region became more mobile, the

Old South began to give way. The wars, the increase in industry coming from the North, and the mechanization of farming brought about greater urbanization, a New South.[81] But it is to be noted that "The New South, like the Old, still looks upon the accomodation of the Negro as its greatest single social problem."[82] The only difference is that the former was more overt in its"accomodation".

As this restructuring of the South was occurring, thousands of Negroes were going to the North to seek opportunity. In the year 1900, more than ninety per cent of America's black population lived in the areas where slavery had formerly existed[83], with Philadelphia and New York as exceptional cases with a Negro population of 62,600 and 60,700 respectively.[84] In 1910, three out of four black Americans lived outside the city and nine out of ten were Southerners.[85] In spite of these low statistics, many Negroes were continuing to move Northward, increasing the black population of New York and Washington to 90,000.[86] World War I was to be the era of "The Great Migration" which occurred after the post-war marasmus of agriculture. By 1930, there was a substantive shift evident which left only 70.7% of American Negroes in the South.[87] Of the 29.3% living outside the South, 1,116,985 lived in New England-MidAtlantic area,[88] the majority living, almost without exception, in the cities.[89]

This change in population from the rural South to the urban North was of profound significance politically. According to Samuel Lubell, the Democrats had a net plurality of 3,608,000 votes in 1936 in America's twelve biggest cities[90]. The statistics do not indicate the number of Negroes who constituted this Democratic victory, but, nonetheless, the massive migration of blacks coming to the cities and obtaining the franchise would militate against continued Southern domination of the party. How did Roosevelt gain the confidence of both these formerly Republican blacks and also the Southern whites?

The urban North, where many black voters resided, had already forsaken the Republican Party by 1928, according to Lubell.[91] In that year, the urban voters of New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Pittsburh, Detroit, Cleveland, Baltimore, St. Louis, Boston, Milwaukee, San Francisco, and Los Angeles produced a plurality for Smith.[92] This 38,000 net vote[93] was evidence for later political scientists that "the Roosevelt Revolution" was preceded by "an Al Smith Revolution".[94] The year of the "Al Smith Revolution" five Southern states had bolted the Democratic Party only to return in 1932, bringing about an uneasy alliance between the urban North with its large black population and the predominantly white Southern Democracy.

Roosevelt had a dual advantage from the moment of the campaign's inception, his name and his party. The former might draw Negro vo-

ters who had supported the first President Roosevelt or studied the progressive attempts of the Bullmoosers in 1912. Although very distant cousins, both men were similar in credentials, even to the point that both had been Assistant Secretary of the Navy. To black voters who had backed Teddy Roosevelt, a Republican, the idea of voting for a Democrat backed by the same family name, may not have seemed so strange. On the other hand, Democrats in the South placed party solidarity so high that they could be counted upon, for 1928 had verified the futility of party apostasy.

Secondly, this balance was sustained by appointing Negroes, but mainly Northerners, to serve in the lower levels of the Executive. The President in 1932 appointed a committee to study race relations, but their function was limited enough to prevent difficulty in the South. These advisors were merely to serve as liasons between the New Dealers and black-Americans, helping to dispel the air of bureaucracy surrounding Washington. An "Adviser on the Economic Status of Negroes", Forman, was appointed although the post was soon turned over to Robert C. Weaver, a Harvard economist. It is noteworthy that among the educators and advisers selected, Mary Bethune of Bethune-Cookman College in Florida was one of the only Southerners while the remainder were diplomats such as William Hastie and O'Hara Lanier or Booker McGraw, a Chicago lawyer. As most of these were neither from the South nor in strategic posts, the Southern Democrats largely overlooked the situation.

The South's indignation was thwarted by a second factor. It was not the President but the Executive agencies which had taken great steps forward in employing Negroes. The blame thereby shifted away from Roosevelt personally, for in fact, under his administration, there were fewer Negroes in "Federal Office and the Diplomatic Consular Service" than under Hoover.[95]

The Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia in 1936, demonstrates the dichotomy within the party between the newly converted Negro Democrats and the "Solid South". The platform remained conspicuously silent on racial issues, although a committee was appointed to consider the question. This passive spirit of merely ignoring the Negro was soon to burst forth into active contempt. The number of black delegates had increased from none in 1928 to 10 alternates in 1932 to 30 in 1936,[96] but no difficulties of report arose until the Reverend Marshall Sheperd rose to give the invocation. The black minister of Mount Olivet Baptist Church of Philadelphia began to speak, and Senator Smith, "Cotton Ed", of South Carolina, walked from the floor in protest. The charitable Revgrend's reaction was only 'Brother Smith needed more prayer' and the minister said he 'was willing to offer it.'[97] "Cotton Ed" returned to the convention but left for good when Congressman Mitchell, though not a delegate, addressed the convention. Ironically enough, it was the Richmond Times-Dispatch which criticized

Senator Smith's reaction, saying:

> The Senator is not aware, apparently, that times have changed in the last three quarters of a century-that the Negro is a citizen, entitled to the rights of a citizen. 98.

Other newspapers reacted less warmly, as did the Anderson Independent-Tribune which felt that the active participation by Negroes "did not contribute anything to party harmony in the South",[99] They went on to say: "However, it seems that the incident was over-emphasized by Sen. Smith, who is very cool on the New Deal."[100] The Batesburg News (South Carolina) was far more critical saying:

> It was not surprising that Negroes were given prominent parts in the proceedings of this Democratic convention for the administration has shown times without number that it holds the Negro in high esteem and is courting him in the North and east as a political, if not a social equal. 101

Whichever opinion more accurately described the mood of the populus, the mood of the voters had been favorable at the polls in 1936, in spite of the controversial convention. Philadelphia was in the past , and it was obvious that the President did not need the South to win. As a spokesman for the N.A.A.C.P. expressed it, "Mr. Roosevelt's victory was so overwhelming that he is the first Democratic president in history who could have been elected had not a single vote been cast for him by the Solid South."[102] Thus, the President knew he could be re-elected without the South, but he did not know whether he could work with Congress without solic-

iting Dixie's aid.

The success which Roosevelt had in working with the leaders of Congress, Robinson, Harrison, and Byrnes, was not the only explanation for the avid support of the New Deal. It has been seen that the benefit of acts such as the AAA accrued to larger farmers , and likewise, it appears that the roles of the two races were changed little by Roosevelt's program. If anything the whites had the stronger position under the New Deal, for it was the white farmers who owned the large tracts of land and the blacks who were predominantly tenants. It is to be noted that "Negroes were the ones hardest hit by the Depression, being the last hired and first fired."[103] This meant that most blacks were dependent upon relief. According to Meier and Rudwick;

> Compared with unemployed whites, a smaller percentage of the unemployed Negroes benefited from relief and public works programs. Despite this discrimination, a higher proportion of the Negro population than of the white population received government aid since Negro unemployment was so much greater.[104]

As a consequence fewer blacks by percentage benefited, but more in number were dependent upon the government for mere sustenance.

Besides the tangible asset of relief, the blacks were given the more intangible asset of respect by the White House. This is particularly true of Mrs. Roosevelt who was well-known for her sympathetic attitude and who made friends with Mrs. Bethune. The reaction she provoked was often intense. As one man termed it :

> President and Mrs. Roosevelt were greatly admired by the masses of Negroes, who loved them for the enemies they made---the most infamous of Southern reactionaries--- as much as for the positive benefits derived from his administration. 105

Although the First Lady and the President expressed this concern, there was no legislation aimed at the Negro,

The policy of the White House seemed to be a passive one. Roosevelt initiated nothing to change the racial status quo, for even in cases where his help was actively solicited, he was still reluctant to act. A specific issue which illustrates his reluctance was the anti-lynching bill which had originated with the Dyer bill in 1932. Seven bills were presented two years later, three authored by Republicans and four by Democrats. 1935 arrived and the Costigan-Wagner Bill was presented, only to be defeated in the Senate by "Cotton Ed" Smith and the filibuster. While the Senate and the House were debating, lynchings were occurring. Although not many in numerical terms, the lynchings took place each year from 1932-1936. In 1932 2 whites and 6 Negroes were victims of lynchings, in 1933 4 whites and 24 Negroes, in 1934 no whites and 15 Negroes, and in 1935 no whites and 8 Negroes.[106] The causes ranged from "Homicide" to "Attempted Rape" and "Felonious Assault". In the four years considered, there were seven lynchings for "Insult to White Persons" and 15 under the rather enigmatic classification of "All Other Causes".[107] In spite of this Roosevelt did not act. Perhaps it would not have seemed so strange if no precedent for presidential action existed, but Coolidge and Hoover

had decried lynching as had seven Southern governors. These seven included Pollard of Virginia, Gardner of North Carolina, Richards of South Carolina, Hardman of Georgia, Sampson of Kentucky, Long of Louisiana, and Moody of Texas. As early as 1928, the General Assembly of Virginia had denounced this practice. It only remained for the President to add his support, which was not forthcoming.

Blacks could take hope in the changing face of the Democratic Party on the local level. Racial barriers were breaking down in several Northern states, such as Illinois, which sent the first black Democrat, Arthur W. Mitchell of Chicago, to the House of Representatives. On the national scene, there were other blacks campaigning for the incumbent, among whom were Adam Clayton Powell, a minister from New York, and Stanley High, previously the editor of the Christian Herald. Along with Bishop R.R. Wright, these two hoped to persuade black voters that Mr. Roosevelt should be re-elected. There were those black leaders, such as Jesse Owens, a 1936 Olympic star, who campaigned assiduously for the opposition, Republican Alf Landon. This Olympic star maintained that:

> President Roosevelt has done something but not enough to benefit the people of the colored race but I believe that election of Governor Landon would be good for America and for the people of the colored race. Governor Landon does not promise much but what promises he makes I think he will keep. 108

Perhaps the fact that black national spokemen campaigned for both sides prevented the Southern Democrats from feeling that

their party was now the party of the black-American as well as that of the South.

And what of the black voters? It appeared that only if it were just a beginning, Roosevelt had helped them. It has been said that:

> While the critics condemned Roosevelt for his manifest failings, the masses of black folk intuitively recognized, as did the masses of common people the world over, his essential humanitarianism and applauded his championship of a world order of freedom, peace, and security for all mankind. 109

It was this general spirit of Roosevelt 's rather than specific deeds performed that won the backing and the respect of the black-Americans while keeping the South's confidence.

CHAPTER V

FRANKLIN ROOSEVELT AS INNOVATOR

Franklin Roosevelt in 1932 succeeded where Al Smith had failed four years before. The former, also a onetime governor of New York and in 1932 a Presidential candidate, was able to maintain a "Solid South" where Smith had met opposition. Although the religious question was the critical issue in the Protestant South, the 1928 apostasy of five formerly Confederate states might have established a precedent for 1932 and 1936. This possibility was overcome by Roosevelt's ready identification with the Wilson administration and Daniel's Department of the Navy. Also in his favor were his "adoption" of the state of Georgia and his choice of a Southern vice-presidential runningmate. His effulgent personality further enhanced his candidacy, not just in the South but in the nation.

Franklin Roosevelt, in contrast to Herbert Hoover, had a sanguine mien, reflecting the belief that America could recover. Not very far from Hoover in age, Roosevelt was very far apart in spirit. In contrast to the Hoover administration Roosevelt began his term of office with alacrity in the "100 Days" which have yet to be surpassed in the number and rapidity of bills passed. In fairness to Hoover, it must be pointed out that he sought Roosevelt's aid during the closing days of the Republican term, only to find the President-elect unwilling to act. This resulted from the natural reluctance of Roosevelt to be associated with this

this unpopular administration's errors. Nevertheless, once in office, his perpetual action and his perspicacity in interpret ing the nation's sentiment reassured the people. As one man expressed it, "Only a person who traveled with the Chief Executive could appreciate the magical effect of his presence and his voice upon the crowds who came to listen."[110] This ability of Roosevelt's was a "quality (which) is 'felt' rather than understood."[111]

Thre principal reason for Southern solidarity transcended mere geographical regions. Nationally, the President pleased both traditionalists and to some degree activists by his pragmatic approach, incorporating ideas from the left and right. An economist by the name of Ralph Robey depicted it as a melange of ideologies, 'For regardless of whether one's leanings are conservative, liberal, or radical, he can find something that he likes.'[112]

For the conservative, there was the Triple A which favored inherently, the wealthy farmer as well as the President's refusal to push an anti-lynching bill. Although Roosevelt had intervened as in the "bank holiday" of 1933, he did not take the more radical action demanded by some, e.g. nationalizing the banks. According to Rexford Tugwell, the 1936 election occurred before these conservative voters had become disaffected with the party. He upheld:

> Politically it was better 'to be recovering' than 'to have recovered' and to have reached stability... (Roosevelt's) enormous majority in 1936 was because the cities had come round and the conservatives had not yet wholly departed.[113]

Many of those conservatives who remained in 1936 believed the Democratic incumbent offered more hope for recovery than did Landon.

For those "Left" of Roosevelt, there were several factors in the Democratic policy that made it more palatable. Among these were the tax bill of 1935 as well as the utilities-holding company act. Added to this were the TVA, the Social Security Act, and the new trend in monetary policy.

Racial policy was flexible enough during the New Deal to encompass both the Northern black voters and the Southern Democrats. The predominantly urban Negroes were encouraged by the appointment of such men as Robert Weaver and women such as Mary Bethune to serve in advisory positions. The paucity and the relatively unimportant nature of these positions pacified the South. The increased participation of blacks on the grass-root level in the North did not disturb Dixie, for the poll tax and the white primaries kept the Southern party under control. The more conspicuous presence of black delegates to the Philadelphia Convention may have annoyed such Southerners as "Cotton Ed" Smith, but they were not troubled by the President himself, as no permanent changes were enacted by the White House.

Thus, in both the economic sphere and in race relations, President Roosevelt enacted measures which were meant to be temporary, measures aimed at reversing the awesome Depression. Had the President desired to do otherwise, to establish a new economy and a new era in racial equality, it would have been necessary to construct institutions for this purpose. In contrast, the institutions which he constructed, with the exception of TVA and Social Security, were neither contrary to America's historical tradition, nor self-perpetuating. The acts, such as the AAA and NRA, were subject to perusal by the Supreme Court which subsequently declared many unconstitutional and were also subject to debilitation in the appropriations process. After President Roosevelt's term, it would be up to the next Administration to establish its own institutions.

In terms of goals, Roosevelt had one goal and that was clearly "recovery". By 1936 the relief program was being reconsidered, for it was not intended to be an interminable source of sustenance for the poor. It was hoped that public works and other methods, such as revaluating the dollar would obviate the need for relief. The New Deal of Franklin Roosevelt was then eclectic and experimental concurrently, hoping to solve the Depression and move forward. Strangely enough, it was a Republican who seemed to interpret the New Deal most dispassionately. Frank Knox, the GOP Vice-

presidential candidate saw the Administration's program in this way:

> It is not relentlessly determined to reorganize our country; it just got started and does not know how to stop. It is not attempting to destroy the Constitution; it just hasn't time to bother with the Constitution. It is not deliberately creating deficits; it just doesn't know how to keep books. 114.

A little harsh, this rather facetious explanation of the Roosevelt policy does point out several important features. Firstly, Roosevelt had no designs to restructure this country; secondly, he did not defy the Constitution, and thirdly, he did not purposely use deficit finance.

It appears then that Franklin Roosevelt was not on the one hand a revolutionary who wanted to transform the nation, nor was he a solid defender of business, i.e., status quo, interests. It appears that he was a reformer who wanted to maintain the basic traditions of private enterprise but modified to suit the critical times. Government intervention was used but not a totally planned economy. According to Tugwell, the President "regarded the state with its government as an agency for enhancing the well-being of citizens".[115] In this way, the scope of government under Roosevelt had been radically increased although the ultimate goals were traditional. Government under this Administration may not have been revolutionary, but it was certainly more humane than any preceding it. It was this which was Roosevelt's contribution to later generations, an augmented responsibility of society to its people.

APPENDIX A

SELECTIONS FROM SOUTHERN NEWSPAPERS

The Lynchburg News:

The NRA, Friday, July 3, 1936 (p.6):

"If the blue eagle hadn't been dead already it would have died of grief when President Roosevelt attacked monopoly and monopolists."

July 5,p.1:

On Sen. Glass:

"Mr. Roosevelt was introduced (at Monticello) by a man who infrequently has been a critic of New Deal policies, Senator Carter Glass of Virginia."

July 7,p.6:

Harry Byrd and Carter Glass, according to Frank Kent, are "the outstanding opponents of the New Deal". He continues:

"The truth is the Virginia senators support Mr. Roosevelt because he wears the label "deomcrat" for no other reason, and they are not at all happy about doing it." Carter Glass still maintains that 'the new deal is not only a national disgrace but dishonest'.

July 19, p.6.

"Maybe we will learn next that it (American Liberty League), invented the 'new deal' and nominated Mr. Roosevelt."

July 22,p.6:

Frank Kent depicts the Democratic inter-party fight; 3-sided:

"And finally, there is the class which for personal politics reasons deem it wise to preserve their party regularity. Hence they will give Mr. Roosevelt perfunctory support, and -most of them- will vote for him in order to be able to say truthfully later that they did so. But in their hearts they will want him beaten, just as much as those of the other classes. The best examples of this third class are to be found among the democrats in the United States senate, extraordinarily few of whom are in the least sincere in their Roosevelt support and a number of whom privately admit it."

The Lynchburg News

July 28th, p.7.
A selection from the Hartford Courant:

"The Patrick Henry of Our Day"(Carter Glass)

"He based his criticisms on what he conceived to be the underlying principles of our form of government."

According to Dorothy Thompson, On The Record,p.6.,Aug.14:

"For the first time in American history theclass struggle has become a political reality...Mr. Roosevelt's party is no longer the traditional democratic party. It is a popular front party."

Carter Glass after the Monticello speech, Aug.30, p.7.:

'"The president is probably indignant, and I am much more so, at the constant attempt to make it appear that I was ironical or sarcastic when I introduced him. I think it is an outrage to impugn a man that way."'

Other newspapers on Roosevelt and the New Deal:

Daily Clarion-Ledger of Jackson,Mississippi:

p.4, Saturday, May 2, 1936:

"If the Charleston Gazette speaks truth regarding the intelligence of West Virginia voters, and if voters in other states are in a similar frame of mind, a good many Congressional candidates are in for a lot of trouble, if not facing defeat this summer."

"West Virginia may listen to the protestations of loyalty to President Roosevelt, but they have not forgotten that in the time of crisis, when his fondest hope lay in the balance, a good many of those who holler now for Mr.Roosevelt voted to defeat his utility holding-company bill".

p.6, May 13: of the GOP:

"There is not much good that you can say about the Republican party and its leaders, you cannot truthfully say that it is at least 'an active'party' for it is not. It is dead and doesn't know it."

p.4, of October 15, 1936, on Al Smith:

"so far as the party's welfare is concerned, it is far better to have Alfred Smith attacking the party and its leaders and presidential nominee from outside than to have him boring from within"...

"He owes the party far more than the party owes him".

Montgomery Advertiser (Alabama):

May 30, 1936, p.4:

"Roosevelt, fortunately, had the temperament to make him the man of the hour. He has blundered, he has committed many errors-but he has served his country as surely as Lincoln saved it, as surely as Washington (saved) it. He founded the third republic, and made it live! "

Richmond Times-Dispatch (Virginia):

August 31:

"Would Thomas Jefferson, easily the foremost radical of his generation, recognize the 'Jeffersonian Democrats' today, if he met them on the street?"

Sept. 20:

"'The people of this country must awaken if they have not done so already, to the realization that we are living in a new era, and that it requires new remedies. We regard Franklin D. Roosevelt as the man best fitted to chart our course through that era for the next four years."

Charleston News and Courier(South Carolina):

Sept.3:

"Every day and in every way Colonel Frank Knox, Republican candidate for vice-president, is making us South Carolina Democrats better and better Democrats by his pernicious speeches... He is against the handouts. We are for them tooth and nail down this way, and whenever a Republican cries out "Economy!" it brings to us the terror of a midnight fire alarm."

Atlanta Journal (Georgia):

"Confronted with a choice between constructiveness and destructiveness on the vital issues of world trade and world peace, the nation's business intelligence naturally turns to President Roosevelt."

APPENDIX B

DETAILED STATISTICS ON THE 1936 ELECTION---NATIONAL FIGURES
(Taken from They Voted for Roosevelt-Robinson)

* Popular Republican Vote (p.686)	16, 675 mill.
* Popular Democratic Vote (p.686)	27.753 mill.
Democratic Electoral Vote (p. 183)	523
Number of States for the Democrats(p.183)	46
Number of Counties for the Democrats:(p.183)	2,636
Number of Southern Counties for FDR (p.24):	1,319
Percentage of Total Votes.(p.183)	60.2

* Taken from Historical Statistics of United States, From Colonial Times to 1957.

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